



SPINAL COURIER

SPINAL CORD
COMMISSION

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January 1996

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With only two months on the job, Vicky has already adapted to the Case Manager position like an "old pro." She is rapidly making her

way across the seven county area meeting the individuals on her caseload. Her main goals are to establish contact as quickly as possible and to develop positive working relationships with the 141 individuals in her territory. Vicky's experience in training and facilitating self-help groups will be a definite asset as future plans are developed to implement support groups for individuals with spinal cord disabilities. Anyone in her area who is interested is encouraged to let her know.

The ASCC members and staff welcome Vicky to the Commission and also extend congratulations on the recent arrival of her new grandson, Dillon Matthew, born December 8, 1995.



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Early this year a report of the findings will be written for the CDC and ASCC. Later, articles for publication and presentation will be written on specific issues. These articles will be instrumental for practitioners and case managers to better serve their clients. Some of the secondary conditions that will be discussed include rates of marriage and divorce; life satisfaction and depression; and rates of Caesarean section births. Also general wellness and preventive medicine will be discussed.

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Monisa Shackelford joined ASCC in October as our new Research Analyst. Her primary responsibility will be to work on the "Women with Spinal Cord Injuries" grant and to assist with the analysis of the recently completed "Identifying Secondary Conditions in Arkansans with Spinal Cord Injuries" survey. *(See related articles in this issue.)*



Monisa received her Masters degree in Sociology from the Univ. of S. Alabama at Mobile. Before coming to the Commission, Monisa worked for the Center for Family Research in Rural Mental Health in Ames, IA. There, she was comparing the effects of short-term rural poverty with long-term generational poverty on the risk taking behavior of adolescents -- particularly in drug and alcohol abuse. Monisa's strong research background, along with her writing ability, brings added diversity to ASCC. Please join us in welcoming her.

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Cheryl L. Vines
Executive Director

Thomas L. Farley
Dee Ledbetter
Co-Editors

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BUCKLE UP!

SECONDARY CONDITIONS SURVEY UPDATE

As you may recall from previous editions of the *Spinal Courier*, ASCC has been working to identify the incidence and effects of secondary conditions. During most of 1995, the ASCC Case Managers administered the secondary conditions survey to many of their clients, completing them in December. At the same time, the ASCC research staff was busy entering the survey data into the computer. Now in 1996, the analysis of the data has begun. The results of the survey will be used to develop better services to deal with issues such as aging and other changes that come with living with a spinal cord injury.

A total of 650 clients responded to the survey. ASCC would like to thank everyone who took the time to answer the survey. Each person who participated by responding to the survey was entered into a drawing to win one of three cash prizes. The drawing took place in December and the winners were Jerry Strassle of Bigelow (\$250), Jackie Fires of Rivervale (\$150) and Mattie Jones of Sherwood (\$100).

SPINAL COURIER Letters

Questions • Suggestions • Directions • Answers

CHRISTMAS WISH COMES TRUE!

Dear Editor:

ASCC client Nancy Hadl had her dearest wish for Christmas fulfilled. Little Rock disc jockey Craig O'Neil announced on his morning radio show in early December that B98.5 would pay the roundtrip fares for Nancy's two children to fly to Denver to spend Christmas with Nancy and her parents.

Nancy's parents had already arranged for her flight to Denver, but could not afford to cover tickets for both children also. One of the Physical Therapists at Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center wrote to B98.5 about Nancy's wish to have her children spend Christmas in Denver, and this wish came true.

Chevy and Shane, ages 15 and 13, flew out of Little Rock on December 21, 1995, to join Nancy in Denver for the holidays.

They returned home to Arkansas earlier this month.

Rose Trosper
ASCC Case Manager
Jonesboro, AR

OUTDOORS SPORTS PLANNED

Dear Editor:

Just a reminder for sportsmen: The ADSA (Arkansas Disabled Sportsman's Association) is already lining up a number of events for the spring. These include a Spring Buffalo River Float trip, a White River Trout Fishing trip and Trap and Skeet Shooting. Call the ADSA at 501-666-2523 or write to P.O. Box 250218, Little Rock, AR 72225-0218 for more information.

Martha Henderson
ASCC Case Manager
Little Rock, AR

SPINA BIFIDA AND CEREBRAL PALSY STUDY CONTINUES

The Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission's statewide study of mothers with a child with spina bifida or a child with cerebral palsy is on schedule and proceeding well. As of December 15th, over 300 surveys had been returned to the Commission office.

Tom Farley, the project's Principal Investigator, stated that the surveys returned so far look very promising and encouraged mothers who had not yet returned their survey to do so. "We're not expecting many surveys over the holidays, but we will renew our collection efforts after the first of the year. What we are trying to measure is small, so every survey we receive gives us a better picture," Tom said.

As promised, a gift certificate was awarded to two of the mothers who returned their survey by December 15, 1995. A random drawing selected the names of Cheryl Gatlin of Magnolia and Teresa McChristian of Rogers as our winners. Both women have received gift certificates which are redeemable for \$25 in groceries or merchandise from any Harvest Food grocery store in the state. Congratulations Cheryl and Teresa!

HIGH PROFILE!

EVELYN WAINRIGHT

Having eighteen years experience within the state system has certainly assisted ASCC Case Manager Evelyn Wainright in her quest to provide quality service to individuals in South Arkansas. Being a lifelong resident of that part of the state has not hurt either. Evelyn obtained her degree from Southern Arkansas University in 1977 and immediately began her career with the state at the Employment Security Division. She began working for the Department of Human Services in 1979, then joined ASCC in 1989 as a Case Manager in the Magnolia office.

As a Licensed Social Worker, Evelyn has utilized her counseling skills to assist many clients and their families in coping with spinal cord disability. She has learned that often one of the most important skills of a Case Manager is effective listening. Evelyn encourages those individuals on the caseload to not be afraid to ask for help, "If you need help, please ask. There are a lot of us out here who need to be needed."

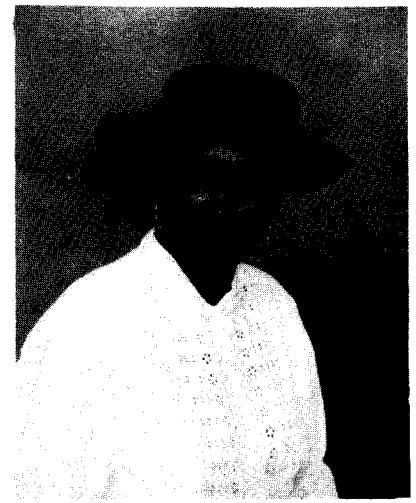
Over the past several years Evelyn and the other Magnolia office staff have successfully coordinated their Annual Fishing Derby at the Southern Arkansas University Armory Pond. This year there were 84 participants. (See article on page 4.)

Recently, working with a local Magnolia newspaper reporter, Evelyn was able to have a timely article published concerning deer stand safety, which also featured one of her clients. Developing community awareness is an essential key to the prevention of

spinal cord injuries and Evelyn continues to do her part.

When she isn't providing services as a Case Manager for ASCC, Evelyn is still a service provider in her own right, volunteering in the community. Twice a month during the evenings, she can be found serving up a steaming hot meal for the needy and homeless at the Stew Pot in Magnolia. As an active member of her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, Evelyn performs many other community services such as adopting a child

for Christmas, collecting canned goods and raising money for Habitat for Humanity. Because of her desire to help others, it is easy to see why Evelyn recently volunteered to participate as a mentor and will be sharing her energy, enthusiasm and knowledge and providing a positive role model for some lucky little girl.



FAMILY MEMBERS: 20 year old son Kevin.

PHRASE THAT BEST DESCRIBES ME: Tenacious and dependable. I will always try and do whatever I have committed myself to do.

LAST GOOD BOOK I READ: *Waiting to Exhale* by Terry McMillan.

FAVORITE WAY TO UNWIND: Spending a day at the lake with family, good friends and good food.

HIDDEN TALENTS/HOBBIES: My hobbies are reading and vacationing in a new spot each year. My best hidden talent is that I'm a good cook.

SOMETHING I'D CHANGE ABOUT MYSELF IF I COULD: Having the courage to attend law school.

ACCOMPLISHMENT I'M MOST PROUD OF: Raising a son as a single parent -- and I might add that I am very proud of him.

MY DREAM VACATION WOULD BE: To spend an entire summer in the Bahamas.

MOST IMPORTANT THING I'VE LEARNED AS A CASE MANAGER: No matter how bad a day I'm having, there's always someone else that's **really** having a bad day and who needs my full attention.



FISHING DERBY AT SAU

Clients of ASCC from a 17-county area around southwest and southeast Arkansas, as well as residents of the Columbia County Independent Living Center, participated in a fishing derby and cookout Saturday, October 7, 1995, at the Southern Arkansas University pond. The AR Game and Fish Commission stocked the pond with 500 pounds of fish for the event.

Several prizes, including a razorback toboggan, clock radio, wall clock, walkman and back pack, were awarded to participants. All ASCC clients present received a gold duffel bag with blue trim and the ASCC logo embossed on it, along with "Fishing Derby '95" printed on it.

The park ranger from Logoly State Park in McNeil gave a presentation, highlighted by a small live alligator (named Wally) -- a "hands on" exhibit for those who wanted to touch. He also brought the skull of a larger alligator, a large turtle shell and a snake skin.

Several businesses donated items to help make the fishing derby a success, including the North Louisiana Rehabilitation Hospital, Marshall's Home Care, Medical Center of South Arkansas, National Medical Rentals and United Medical Rentals. All 84 in attendance had fun just a fishin'.

NASA LANDS IN HOT SPRINGS

The Institute for Neurology and Neuroscience Research (INN Research) held its second annual multiple sclerosis day, New Horizons in MS, on Saturday, September 30, 1995, at the Ramada Inn in Hot Springs. Over 400 persons came throughout the day to view the exhibits and to attend the various seminars which were provided free of charge.

The center of attraction in the exhibit hall was the large NASA display, which included two complete space suits. NASA's involvement with multiple sclerosis (MS) began in the early 1970's, when space suit cooling systems were first tested on MS patients. Today, this technology has advanced to include small portable cooling units known as cool suits. INN Research, in conjunction with the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America (MSAA), provides cool suits to MS patients as a symptomatic therapy, free of charge.

One of the day's highlights was the exciting news of Mr. John Hodson, Sr.'s intention to build a 24 unit independent living facility for MS patients in Hot Springs. Mr. Hodson is the President of the MSAA. This two million dollar project will help advance the institute's work in providing high quality services to MS patients.

The third annual MS day has tentatively been set for early September 1996. Everyone with an interest in multiple sclerosis is invited to this upcoming event.

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SCHOOL

Graduating high school seniors needing assistance for further education may want to check out the resources available to disabled persons. Persons with a diagnosis of spina bifida are eligible to apply for a scholarship through the Spina Bifida Association. You may request an application by calling 851-3351.

The Governor's Commission on People with Disabilities offers \$500 scholarships to students for college or graduate school. Call Barry Vuletich at 296-1626 or write him at 1616 Brookwood Drive, Little Rock, AR 72202 to have your name placed on the list to receive an application. Applications will be sent as soon as they are available.

For high school seniors or undergraduates at a four year college or university who are enrolled in a business program, there are \$2,000 scholarships from the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. To apply, send your full name and address to:

President's Committee on Employment of
People with Disabilities
Attention: Scholarship Program
1331 F Street NW
Washington, DC 20004-1007.

Other scholarships may be available in the coming months, so contact your ASCC Case Manager if you are interested.

SNORING AND SLEEP APNEA

by Shirley McCluer, M.D., ASCC Medical Director

Snoring has been a subject for jokes and complaints for many years. The complaints don't come from the snorer (who usually is blissfully unaware of the problem), but from anyone within hearing of the snorer. However, it is now being recognized that snoring can be a sign of a serious respiratory problem called "Sleep Apnea."

WHAT IS SLEEP APNEA?

Apnea means absent breathing. Sleep apnea refers to periods during sleep when breathing stops for at least ten seconds. More than five such episodes per hour are considered significant.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OR COMPLICATIONS?

Morning headache, daytime sleepiness, memory problems, restless sleep, irritability, high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke and even death may result from sleep apnea. People with sleep apnea are 2-5 times more likely to have an automobile accident because of falling asleep while driving. However, some people with severe sleep apnea may not be aware of any symptoms.

WHO IS AT RISK? In the general population sleep apnea is seen mostly in middle-aged men (especially if overweight), and post-menopausal women. In addition, recent articles in the medical literature suggest that persons with spinal cord injury, polio and other neurological diseases, such as multiple sclerosis, are at particular risk for this problem; so, it is important for you to know what to watch for.

WHAT CAUSES SLEEP APNEA?

There are many recognized causes, but the study of this condition is fairly new and there is still much that is poorly understood about it. There are two basic types of sleep apnea:

Obstructive Apnea - where the flow of air is blocked somewhere between the nose and the lungs. These are the snorers. The blockage is usually in the back of the throat which relaxes during sleep, especially in the back lying position.

Central Apnea - where the fault is in the respiratory center of the brain which fails to stimulate breathing for a variety of reasons. This is more commonly associated with aging and with persons with neurological disorders.

WHAT CAN BE DONE?

There are several simple measures that may be helpful in mild cases of sleep apnea, such as:

- Avoid alcohol within two hours of bedtime. Alcohol depresses breathing and makes apneas more frequent and more severe.
- Avoid sleeping pills. They also depress breathing.
- Take all medications and drugs with care. Medications prescribed for headaches, anxiety, and other common complaints can affect sleep and breathing.
- Sleep on one side instead of on the back.
- Lose any excess weight.
- Medications to relieve congestion of the nose may be helpful in reducing snoring, but they may aggravate high blood pressure.

HOW IS IT DIAGNOSED?

The most accurate test is to spend the night in a Sleep Lab with monitoring of all functions while sleeping. However, this is rather



expensive and would not be practical for everyone. A simpler test is to use a pulse oximeter which attaches to a finger and records the blood oxygen level throughout the night. This could be done at home and can indicate whether the problem is severe enough to justify further evaluation or treatment.

WHO SHOULD BE EVALUATED? Consult a physician if you, or someone you know, suspects sleep apnea from the above description, especially if someone who sleeps in your vicinity says that you stop breathing for long periods.

In summary, sleep is essential for good physical and mental health and anything that interferes with sleep on a regular basis can have serious consequences. Sleep apnea has been recognized in recent years as a significant cause of sleep disturbance.

Further information about sleep apnea can be requested from the Arkansas Education and Resource Center on Spinal Cord Injury in the Little Rock office of ASCC by calling 296-1792 or 1-800-459-1517.

1. B - 55 to 65 lbs.
2. B - Every six months.
3. False - A tire tool is best.

From page 8

**WHEELCHAIR QUIZ
ANSWERS TO**

STRETCHING . . . SOME HOW TO'S

by Grover Evans, Ph.D., Chairman, Arkansas Spinal Cord Commission

This is the second of a three part series.

Stretching is very easy to learn. But there is a right way, as well as a wrong way, to stretch. The right way is to relax. The wrong way is to bounce up and down or to stretch to the point of pain. This method of exercise can actually do more harm than good.

If you take the time to stretch correctly and regularly, you will find that every movement you make becomes easier. It takes time to loosen up tight muscles or muscle groups; but guess what, time is quickly forgotten when you start to feel good. Remember, make it feel good, not bad.

THE EASY STRETCH

When beginning a stretching program, spend 10-30 seconds on the easy stretch. Remember, no bouncing! Go the point where you feel a mild tension, and relax as you hold the stretch. That feeling of tension should subside as you hold the position. Ease off slightly if it does not, and find a degree of tension that is comfortable. The easy stretch reduces muscular tightness and readies the tissues for the developmental stretch.

THE DEVELOPMENTAL STRETCH

After several minutes of the easy stretch, move slowly into the developmental stretch. Remember, no bouncing! This time you want to go an inch further until you

again feel a mild tension and hold for 10-30 seconds. Control is the name of the game. The tension should diminish; if not, ease off slightly. This area of stretching fine tunes the muscles and increases flexibility.

BREATHING

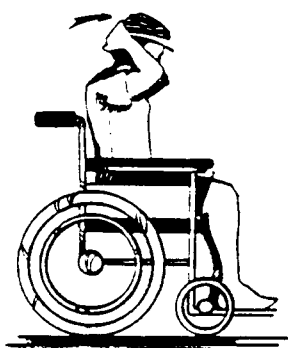
Always breathe slowly, rhythmically and under control, naturally. When you are bending forward to do a stretch, exhale as you bend forward and then breathe slowly as you hold the stretch. Do **not** hold your breath while stretching. If a stretch position inhibits your natural breathing pattern, then you are obviously not relaxed. Ease up on the stretch so you can breathe naturally.

COUNTING

At first, silently count the seconds for each stretch; this will ensure that you hold the proper tension for a long enough time. After a while you will be able to stretch by the way it feels, without the distraction of counting.

Here are some stretching exercises that I recommend. In our third and final part of this series I will talk about the stretch reflex and look at the neurological level of each spinal injury.

STRETCHING POSTERIOR NECK AND ANTERIOR SHOULDER



Clasp your hands behind your head at about ear level. Slowly pull your head forward until you feel a slight stretch in the back of the neck.



Clasp your hands behind your head and pull your elbows and head back until you feel a stretching in the anterior shoulder and posterior neck area.



Hold on to both sides of a doorway with your hands behind you at about shoulder level. Lean forward and down to stretch the anterior and top of shoulder.



Hold on to both sides of a doorway with your hands behind you at ear level. Lean into the doorway to stretch the chest and anterior shoulder.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

I can't believe another year is over. The older I get, the faster the years fly past, it seems. And now it's 1996, the year that many of us wheelchair sports junkies have been waiting for, the first time that the Paralympics, the Olympics for folks with disabilities, will be held in the United States. In Atlanta, August 16-25, just days after the centennial Olympiad, the Paralympics will host over 4,000 athletes from 110 countries, the second largest athletic event held in this country.

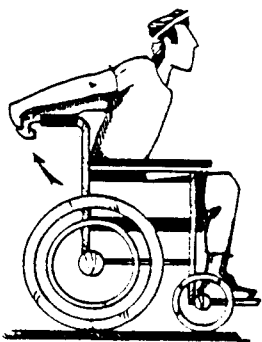
Yes, I'll be there. They've had my volunteer application since before the office opened. What will I be doing? Who cares? I just want to be part of it. Hopefully, I'll get to watch our Arkansas athletes compete. Tim Kazee was selected for the USA wheelchair basketball team in October. Grover Evans goes to the swimming trials next month. Others will compete in trials in the next few months for a chance to represent the USA.

Many people see wheelchair sports as a diversion, an activity. I don't. I see it as a positive movement. Civil rights, accessibility, independence, recognition, equality, all those things that we work on every day for and with people with disabilities, are being addressed through sports. Tim and his teammates may not make the money that Dream Team III will, but they'll wear the same uniform, have the same sponsors, sleep in the same Olympic Village (and hopefully bring home the same gold medal!). The venues in Atlanta will be the most accessible, for both events, of any time in history to date. And, for the first time, people with disabilities are running the show. Andy Fleming, CEO of the Paralympics, a double amputee, has assembled his management staff over the past three years of many competent folks with disabilities (like Aric Fine, who spoke at our conference in '94) who bring a perspective never before available to the event. Yes, they're making an impact, working beside their clinical, civil rights and sports colleagues to assure that Paralympic athletes have the same opportunities and experiences as their Olympic counterparts.

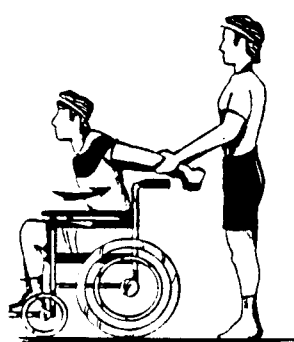
Am I excited? You bet. We can be part of history in Atlanta in August. If you want to be there, contact Ticket Information: (404) 724-2TIX; Volunteer Opportunities: (404) 724-2VOL; Accommodations/Lodging: (800) 243-1203.

Cheryl L. Vines

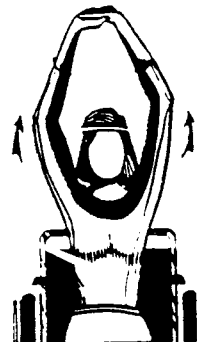
STRETCHING ANTERIOR SHOULDER AND INNER FOREARM



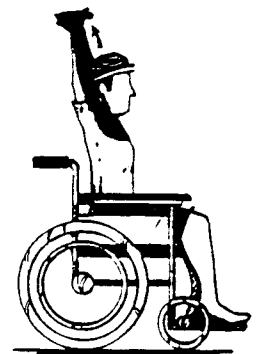
Clasp your hands behind your back, then lift your arms up until you feel a stretch in the anterior shoulder and chest. Keep your chest out and chin tucked.



Place your arms behind your back with someone assisting by holding on to both arms above the wrists. Assistant pulls your arms back and up to stretch the anterior shoulder and chest. Keep your chest out and chin tucked.



Grasp one hand over the other above your head with palms facing upward. Push your arms up to stretch the anterior and inner arm.



Clasp your hands above your head with palms facing upward. Push your arms up and slightly back to stretch the anterior shoulder and inner forearm.

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